



GETTING STARTED: A GUIDE TO CREATING YOUR VIDEO

Objective

Create a two minute video about what you are doing to address a global issue that matters to you. Below are a few real examples of how high school students are addressing global issues:

- Forming a student group against genocide that reaches out to world policy makers, educates local communities, and raises money for humanitarian projects around the world.
- Creating a sister school program with a high school in a developing country to promote cross-cultural understanding.
- Putting together an album of artwork by orphaned girls in China and selling it to raise money for their education.
- Setting up an e-mail correspondence program between high school students in Iran and the United States to encourage cross-cultural understanding.
- Setting up coffee machines at school that sell fair-trade coffee and donating the proceeds to organizations that fight poverty.

Prizes

Three (3) winning videos will be chosen from the submissions. Each winner will receive a **Flip Ultra™ video camera**. The winners will be announced on our website on January 31st, 2011.

Rules & Eligibility

- Your video must be no longer than 2 minutes.
- Your video must be in English or subtitled in English.
- Your video must not contain any vulgar or offensive material.
- You must complete and submit the online entry form along with your video. (Video submissions without an entry form will not be accepted.) If you are under 18, you will need the consent of a parent or guardian on the entry form to participate in this contest.
- Only individuals may submit videos. You may collaborate with other students to make your video, but you must designate one person to be the primary contact on the online entry form.
- Only one (1) entry per individual.
- Your entry form and video must be submitted by 11:59pm EST on December 17, 2010 to be eligible for the contest.

Judging Criteria

The videos will be judged by the Choices Program and will take into account:

- Content: Does the video meet the objective of the contest?
- Creativity: Is the message communicated in a creative way?
- Effectiveness: Is the information in the video communicated clearly? Is it informative and compelling?
- Execution: What is the overall quality of the video?



PRE-PRODUCTION (PLANNING YOUR VIDEO)

Video Style

Decide on the style of your video, for example, documentary, animation, music video, etc. These are just some examples of styles you can experiment with. Remember that communicating your message effectively is key when creating any video, and style plays a big part in how that message is communicated.

Teamwork

If you are working with other students, it's a good idea to assign roles, such as producer, writer, director, editor, camera operator, etc. One person may have more than one role.

Treatment

You may find it helpful to write a treatment for your video. A treatment is basically a written description of your video. It is the foundation of your video and will help keep you focused as you go through the production process.

Your treatment should include:

- A description of your video's message or the story you are trying to tell.
- The style of your video and why you chose it.
- A script outline that shows the content and structure of your video. How does your video start? What do you see and hear? Describe what is happening in key scenes. Are there titles on the screen? What do they say? How does your video end? Parts of your script outline may change as you shoot or edit, but it's important to identify key points that you want to highlight and stick to them.

Storyboards

You may want to include storyboards for key scenes. Storyboards are rough drawings that provide a literal picture of what your video will look like. Use your storyboards to work out framing (what you will see in your shot), camera angles, and blocking (how you want to position people in your shot). Knowing how you want your shots to look beforehand will help you (and anyone working with you) once you start shooting.



Production Checklist

As you develop your script outline, keep a list of all the things you will need in your video. These may include:

- Cast (actors) or people to interview* (and the questions you want to ask them)
- Locations
- Props
- Photos, videos, and/or music (see the note about licensing under the Post-production section on page 6)
- Titles (text on screen)
- Narration

*Make sure every person who will appear in your video is aware of the video's purpose and knows that it will be posted online for public viewing. It is a good idea to have each person sign a **Release and Consent** form before you start shooting.

Schedule

Work out a schedule to determine how long you will spend on each stage of your video's production:

- Pre-production—Includes working out shot setups, drawing storyboards, casting actors, scheduling interviews, scouting locations, and getting your equipment.
- Production—Shooting all the scenes for your video.
- Post-production—Includes importing/capturing your footage from your camera to your computer, editing, adding photos, titles, music, and narration, and exporting your final video to the web.



PRODUCTION (SHOOTING YOUR VIDEO)

Video Equipment

All you need is a video camera. If your school has a video/audio department, check to see if you can sign out equipment, or see if a family member has a camera you can borrow. A tripod and microphone are handy, though not necessary.

Camera Tips

- The best way to get smooth and steady shots is to use a tripod or check out **this tutorial** for good tips on hand-held shooting.
- Experiment with framing and camera angles. Try wide shots and close-ups, and low-angle and high-angle shots, as they can produce different effects depending on what you're shooting. When in doubt, shoot it a few different ways. You can always decide which works best once you start editing. If you're filming an interview with someone, consider using **the rule of thirds**.
- Generally, you want to avoid zooming while you shoot. Use the zoom to frame up your shot first, then start shooting.
- Shoot b-roll (additional shots that help set the scene). For example, if you are creating a film about recycling, you might get shots of people throwing away trash, garbage trucks picking up trash or recycling, litter on the street, etc. These shots will come in handy when you're editing.

Lighting Tips

- In most cases, if you're shooting indoors, you will need to use extra lights to make the room brighter. You can use overhead lights or household lamps to add light to a room. Try to avoid mixing fluorescent lights with tungsten lights, as they have different color temperatures.
- If the light is too harsh, try bouncing it off a piece of white foam core or even a white ceiling. Alternately, you can soften a harsh light by hanging a piece of fabric in front of it. (Just make sure it's not too close to the bulb!)
- Most digital video cameras allow you to manually adjust the aperture (lens opening). Opening the aperture all the way will allow more light to reach the lens (the smaller the aperture number, the larger the opening).
- Avoid having a strong light source behind a subject as this will create a silhouette effect and make them look dark.



Audio Tips

Don't neglect the audio!

- Always use headphones so that you can monitor the sound going into the camera.
- If you have a microphone, point it directly at your subject or position your camera's microphone as close to your subject as possible.
- You can make a boom mic by taping your microphone to a broom handle and holding it above your actors' heads.
- Turn off any non-essential electrical appliances (e.g. computers, heaters, AC, fridge, fluorescent lights) as they create a background hum that will be picked up by the microphone.



POST-PRODUCTION (EDITING AND EXPORTING YOUR VIDEO)

Editing Software

Most computers come with basic video editing software already installed (iMovie for Macs, Movie Maker for PCs). Here are some helpful tutorials:

- **iMovie tutorials**
- **Movie Maker tutorials**

Editing Tips

- After you've imported your footage, assemble your shots into a rough cut. Record any voice-over or narration and add it to your edit.
- Now go back and start adjusting. If your video is too long, see what you can eliminate while still keeping the message of your video intact. You may realize that your video flows better without certain shots.
- Add any transitions, effects, titles, credits, or graphics. Smooth out awkward cuts with transitions, or cover them up completely with b-roll shots.
- Review your final edit with a friend or family member to get their feedback.

Using Photos, Videos, Sounds and Music

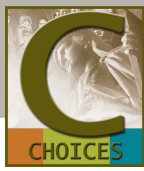
You may choose to enhance your video with photos, video clips, sounds, and/or music.

NOTE: If you do incorporate these elements, you **MUST** make sure you have clearance to use them in your video. If you did not create these elements yourself, make sure you follow any licensing rules set forth by the creator and obtain any necessary permission (preferably written) from the creator to use them. Do **NOT** use copyrighted images.

There are several good sources online where you can find free images and sounds/music available for download under Creative Commons licenses. Be sure to check what type of license the file is under and attribute the creator accordingly (for example, in your video's end credits).

Image sites:

- **Flickr** (check the “Only search within Creative Commons-licensed content” box under the Advanced Search section)
- **Wikimedia Commons**
- **U.S. Government Photos and Images** (mostly public domain, but check the disclaimers for each site)

**Sound and music sites:**

- **ccMixer**
- **Free Music Archive**
- **The Freesound Project**
- **Audiofarm**
- **MobyGratis**

The licensing information for a particular image or music/sound file is usually located on the webpage for that particular file. Click on the licensing information to read the full licensing rules.

Exporting and Uploading Your Video:

Export your final video according to **these specs**. Then upload it to **Vimeo**:

- Create a free Vimeo Basic account at <http://vimeo.com/join>
- Go to the contest group page - <http://vimeo.com/groups/bethechange2> - and click “Join this group”. Under the “Videos” tab, click “Upload video to group”. Choose the file to upload. You must include a title and a brief description of your video. Click “Save changes” once you are done.
- Complete and submit the online Entry Form and Release (<http://www.choices.edu/bethechange/enter.php>). Videos without an entry form will not be accepted and will not appear on the Vimeo group page.